

**Swiss Doctoral Program Network in Accounting Research**

**Institute of Financial Analysis - University of Neuchâtel**

**How to Write Successfully for Top Tier Accounting Journals**

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**Course Objectives:** The broad aim of this course is to help participants develop their academic writing skills and enhance their ability to submit well written and professionally presented academic articles for publication; in short, it's about getting the writing right. Specifically it aims to:

- sharpen awareness of what constitutes good academic writing
- provide input on the skills necessary to put this into practice
- provide the opportunity to practice these skills and to give and receive feedback on participants' own work.
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**Teaching/learning methods:**

The course is delivered in workshop format, using a mixture of discussion, interactive exercises and a minimum of powerpoint presentation.

**Course requirements:**

- participants should attend every session and come prepared to engage actively in class
- prior to the course each participant will be asked to fill in and return an individual needs assessment form. This ensures that participants give some thought in advance to what they are hoping to get from the course and how they can make the best use of the opportunity. It also helps me to ensure that the content and delivery are as relevant as possible to participants' needs
- there will be preparation work to be done between sessions but this will be kept to a minimum
- each participant should bring with them the following:
  - a hard copy example of their own work, namely an advanced full draft of an abstract for discussion and critique in class
  - two recently published articles from different top tier journals in their field for use as models, read in advance
  - their own printed copy of all course materials, which will be made available electronically in advance

**Useful (but not essential) pre-course reading:**

Publishing in AMJ – parts 1-7 (AMJ 2011/12, vol 54, nos 3-6 and vol 55, nos 1 and 2). This seven-part series is written by AMJ editors giving advice on how to improve the quality of submissions. They do not concentrate specifically on the writing as such but nevertheless provide useful food for thought before putting pen to paper.

## Workshop Program:

### Day 1.

1. Introductions
2. Course aims and objectives
3. Current state of play
  - main worries/difficulties in writing papers for publication
  - what are editors/reviewers looking for?
4. The building blocks of good academic writing
  - the writing process
  - efficient reading and note taking
  - referencing
  - sentence structure
  - paragraphing
5. Academic register and voice

### Lunch

6. Achieving narrative flow
  - coherence
  - cohesion
  - word order
7. Writing for impact
8. Active v passive
9. Article mining and critique

### Day 2.

1. Writing tight
  - clarity/avoiding ambiguity
  - concision
  - precision
2. Punctuation
  - uses of the colon and semi-colon
  - relative clauses
3. US v British English

## Lunch

4. Writing introductions
  - structure
  - research question/thesis statement
  - contribution statement
  - 'the hook'
5. Referring to literature
  - writing critically
  - reporting verbs
  - paraphrasing and summarising
  - hedging language

## Day 3.

1. Writing abstracts
  - theory
  - practice – peer critique
2. Common mistakes
3. Easily confused words
4. Abbreviations
5. Open slot

## Lunch

6. Revising, editing and finishing
7. The submission process – responding to reviewers
8. Individual goals – what now?
9. Questions and round-off
10. Course evaluation

